

The 28th

mcwe



Maine Child Welfare Education



Annual Conference

MOVING BEYOND ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

JUNE 28, 2023

CROSS INSURANCE CENTER

515 MAIN ST., BANGOR, ME

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Moving Beyond ACEs: Trauma and
Resilience in a Post-Pandemic World

presented by

Allegra Hirsh-Wright, MSW, LCSW



Department of Health
and Human Services
Maine People Living
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives



SPURWINK

Northern Light Health is approved as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the Northeast Multistate Division Education Unit, an accredited approver of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

6.25 Contact Hours will be provided pending approval

Approval for Continuing Legal Education credits, Continuing Professional Education credits for Guardians ad Litem, and Psychology credits is being sought.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 7:15-8:00 | Registration |
| 8:00 - 8:15 | Opening Remarks - Mark Moran, LCSW |
| 8:15 - 9:45 | Keynote - Allegra Hirsh-Wright, MSW, LCSW - "Moving Beyond ACEs: Trauma and Resiliency in a Post-Pandemic World" |
| 9:45 - 10:00 | Break |
| 10:00 - 11:30 | Morning Breakout Sessions Workshop A: Leslie Lennig, LCSW - "#Today's Youth: A Look at How to Support (and Understand) the LGBTQIA+ Community" Workshop B: Judith Josiah-Martin, PHD, ACSW, CADC and Lisa Deszo, LCSW, LADC, CCS - "Re-Wilding Our Children: Using Nature to Cope with Post-Pandemic Anxiety and Depression" Workshop C: Richard Hooks Wayman, J.D. - "Family Homelessness: Its Impact on Children and Child Welfare Systems" |
| 11:30 - 12:30 | Lunch |
| 12:30 - 1:00 | OCFS Update - Dr. Todd Landry |
| 1:00 - 1:15 | Break |
| 1:15 - 3:15 | Afternoon Breakout Sessions Workshop D: Allegra Hirsh-Wright, MSW, LCSW - "Stress, Overwhelm and Resilience" Workshop E: Judith Josiah-Martin, PHD, ACSW, CADC - "Masked: The Hidden Impact on Substance Affected Families" Workshop F: Chris McLaughlin, MSW, LCSW - "Reconciling Expectations and Redefining Guiderails: Educational and Social Considerations for Children in a Post-Pandemic World" |
| 3:15 - 3:30 | Break |
| 3:30 - 4:15 | Plenary - Allegra Hirsh-Wright, MSW, LCSW - "Reconnecting to Joy" |
| 4:15 - 4:30 | 28th Closing Remarks and Conference Evaluations |

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Moving Beyond ACEs: Trauma and Resilience in a Post-Pandemic World

Allegra Hirsh-Wright, MSW, LCSW

The early days of the pandemic were a shock, a time when we experienced a sudden spike in adrenaline which buffered our ability to feel deep pain so we could get out of danger, and increased alertness which allowed us to make better in-the-moment decisions. We soon began to realize we were in a 'marathon not a sprint' as so many of us heard – over and over – and we moved into a period of prolonged psychological pain, which came from our emotional needs, for certainty, control, and connectedness, not being met. We are now in the rehabilitation phase, oftentimes the most painful of all. It is a time of digging deeper to rebuild, repair, and regrow. All of this during a time when we, and the children and families we work with, are experiencing additional adversities such as poverty, food, job, and housing insecurity, environmental and social challenges, and extremely limited resources.

This session will go beyond the conversation of ACEs and the 1998 ACEs Study by discussing the layered adversities we are all currently grappling with and acknowledging the impact. We will also explore the connection between individual and community resilience and the importance of focusing on both.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this workshop:

1. Participants will be able to elaborate on the multiple layers of adversity and trauma experienced.
2. Participants will be able to communicate to others how adversity and trauma have impacted them and the children and families they work with.
3. Participants will be able to identify at least one resilience protective factor that can be implemented.

MORNING BREAKOUTS

WORKSHOP A

Today's Youth: A Look at How to Support (and Understand) our LGBTQIA+ Community

Leslie Lennig, LCSW

Many teachers, clinicians, case managers, etc. describe feeling under prepared to work respectfully with individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+. This breakout session is designed to offer a framework around terminology, communication, and respect. Topics covered will include: proper use of pronouns, sexual orientation spectrum, and the components of gender.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this workshop:

1. Participants will be able to define at least five LGBTQIA+ terms.
2. Participants will be able to describe awareness of the sexual orientation spectrum.
3. Participants will be able to identify three components of gender.
4. Participants will be able to identify at least two ways to support LGBTQIA+ students.
5. Participants will be able to describe an appropriate response to students' use of pronouns.

WORKSHOP B

Re-Wilding Our Children: Using Nature to Cope with Post-Pandemic Anxiety and Depression

Judith Josiah-Martin, PHD, ACSW, CADC and Lisa Deszo, LADC, CCS

In this presentation, we will examine the possible ways to recommend and assist adults and children regain mental wellbeing, specifically using nature to regulate affect and mood dysregulation. The pandemic moved everyone indoors quickly-increasing anxiety and depression for many reasons. This movement was highlighted as the lack of space physically and metaphorically for many children and adults (Louv, 2015) with contributions to isolation and mood dysregulation. In the book *Last Child in the Woods*, the term "nature deficit disorder" is coined as a non-medical descriptor by Louv (2015) who used it to describe the impact of the proliferation of electronic communications; poor urban planning and disappearing open space; increased street traffic; diminished importance of the natural world in public and private education; and parental fear magnified by news and entertainment media. We know that parents and children reported increased anxiety and depression symptoms during the pandemic, along with reports of the contributions of pervasive viewing of the news reports of the COVID-19 death tolls, and the restrictions of movement and masking measures used to curtail infection spread. Patrick et. al. (2020) reported that 27% of parents experienced worsening mental health following the pandemic onset. Feinberg et. al. (2021) found increased depressive symptoms during the first months of the pandemic in a sample of 129 parents. This workshop will explore the role of COVID-19 on depression and anxiety in children and adults and the role of the loss of external out of home movement as a contributing factor. We will explore the benefits of using nature as a post-pandemic intervention and strategies for "re-wilding" children and expanding their desire for being outdoors.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this workshop:

1. Participants will be able to identify two ways anxiety and depression have changed post-pandemic.
2. Participants will be able to describe the value of nature as a viable intervention for mood dysregulation.
3. Participants will identify and be able to use three strategies to helping parents and children build use of nature into their daily routine.

WORKSHOP C

Family Homelessness: Its Impact on Children and Child Welfare Systems

Rich Hooks Wayman, J.D., President & CEO VOA Northern New England

During one January night in 2022, HUD conducted a nation-wide survey and found over 50,000 families in the U.S. (with an average of 2 or more children) experiencing homelessness that night. Homelessness has a significant socio-emotional and economic impact on children and families. Children experiencing homelessness and those who live in unstable and unsafe housing have a disproportionate chance of entering foster care and child welfare system services. This workshop will explore what research has exposed regarding the incidence and longitudinal trajectories of children and unaccompanied homeless youth experiencing homelessness, as well as, how child welfare systems and direct line services have responded to meet the needs of children. The workshop will outline and discuss current resources that exist for homeless families in Maine, the state's efforts to implement a coordinated entry system into homeless services, and opportunities for advocacy to secure support and resources for children and families. National best practices or model approaches to serving homeless children and youth through child welfare services will be discussed. Finally, federal resources and state policy solutions (and barriers) to family and child homelessness will be analyzed and debated by workshop attendees.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this workshop:

1. Participants will be able to reiterate the incidence, characteristics, and long-term outcomes for homeless children.
2. Participants will be able to identify the differences between family and individual homelessness.
3. Participants will be able to state at least two factors that may lead involvement with child welfare services for homeless children and distinguish these factors from systemic bias that may lead to over-representation of homeless children in out-of-home placements.
4. Participants will be able to identify the federal and state housing assistance programs and funding that may support families.
5. Participants will be able to describe Maine's new coordinated entry process and HUG regional approach to ending homelessness and how child welfare practitioners may interface.
6. Participants will be able to provide at least three of the different eligibility criteria for shelter services, General Assistance, public housing, MaineHousing services, and HUD affordable housing programs.
7. Participants will be able to identify other state models of housing navigation services embedded in child welfare practices.
8. Participants will be able to state the data and policy reforms still necessary in Maine to meet the needs of children impacted by homelessness and child welfare involvement.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUTS

WORKSHOP D

Stress, Overwhelm, and Resilience Allegra Hirsh-Wright, MSW, LCSW

The last few years have been filled with increased stress, uncertainty, overwhelm, and trauma. Long-term exposure to these can impact the way we think, feel, and (re)act. The continued upheaval of the pandemic has created a crisis situation that has resulted in the utilization of in-the-moment, first responder-type responses by many service providers. Validating the chronic stress of the job, understanding how chronic stress can lead to toxic stress, reducing mental health stigma, and supporting the use of strategies that mitigate and manage chronic/toxic stress reactions are all ways to support ourselves when we notice we are impacted.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this workshop:

1. Participants will be able to define empathic strain and overwhelm and how they impact personal and professional functioning.
2. Participants will be able to identify the differences between self-care and resilience building and why the differences are important.
3. Participants will be able to identify at least two specific strategies to manage and mitigate empathic strain and increase resilience.

WORKSHOP E

Masked: The Hidden Impact on Substance Affected Families Judith Josiah-Martin, PHD, ACSW, CADC

There are more than 2.2 billion children in the world who constitute approximately 28% of the world's population. Those aged between 10 to 19 years make up 16% of the world's population (UNICEF, 2019). COVID-19 has impacted the lives of people around the world including children and adolescents in an unprecedented manner (Singh et. al. 2020). Parents were noted to be at increased risk due to their unique challenges of managing work and children suddenly at home all day. Patrick et. al. (2020) reported that 27% of parents experienced worsening mental health following the pandemic onset. Feinberg et. al. (2021) found increased depressive symptoms during the first months of the pandemic in a sample of 129 parents. Among adults, increased depression/anxiety between the pre-pandemic period and after the pandemic onset was associated with a higher probability of increased alcohol use (OR=1.06), and this relation did not vary by parental status. Pandemic-timed increases in depression/anxiety were also associated with a higher probability of increased use of other substances (OR=1.08) among both parents and non-parents; however, the relation was stronger among parents (OR=1.12) than non-parents (OR=1.04) (Dodge et. al. 2021). This workshop will explore the role of COVID-19 pandemic on substance use and discuss the response of substance affected families pandemic guidelines. We will examine trauma enactments and ongoing pandemic influences and review strategies and intervention for repair and rebuilding of safe families.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this workshop:

1. Participants will be able to describe the influence a pandemic has on substance use.
2. Participants will be able to state the effects of substance use on family functioning under pandemic conditions.
3. Participants will be able to identify at least two recommended responses and interventions to assist children and parents affected by substance use as a result of pandemic conditions.
4. Participants will identify three strategies or interventions that they can apply to their organization.

WORKSHOP F

Reconciling Expectations and Redefining Guardrails: Educational and Social Considerations for Children in a Post-Pandemic World Christopher McLaughlin, MSW, LCSW

For the last 3+ years, COVID-19 has appropriately dominated discussions around child development, parenting, supporting education, and the behavioral health and social needs of youth. As we approach a post-pandemic world, it's essential that we now acknowledge how we defended our "bubbles" during the pandemic and discuss our approaches to these issues now that the global pandemic has shifted. We must seek to discover what our new realities will be in the future? And, here's what makes this challenging: We still don't know this answer! While youth have absolutely experienced significant needs during the pandemic, parents, caregivers, educators, and providers have also been impacted to a high degree. This interactive session will review where we've collectively been and provide some suggestions about where we might be going in the months and years ahead as we work to continue to support youth in a post-pandemic world.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this workshop:

1. Participants will be able to identify at least three ways in which the pandemic affected them as well as the effects on their family members and the populations in which they work.
2. Participants will be able to describe the behavioral health and social impacts of the pandemic on youth of all ages.
3. Participants will identify at least two ways in which teachers and social service providers have been especially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on burnout and compassion fatigue.
4. Participants will be able to identify at least two components of trauma-informed care.
5. Participants will be able to describe the pandemic's impact on parents and caregivers.
6. Participants will be able to identify at least two tools and strategies to begin the process of re-establishing and re-negotiating "guardrails" and expectations for young people.

AFTERNOON PLENARY

Reconnecting to Joy

Allegra Hirsh-Wright, MSW, LCSW

This 30-minute TedTalk-type session is one person's experience of becoming disconnected to joy and the journey of reconnection. Utilizing humor, sincerity, and raw honesty, this session includes some specific strategies we can all use when feeling disconnected to what matters most.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this workshop:

1. Participants will be able to define joy and why it is important.
2. Participants will be able to identify one resilience building strategy they can utilize immediately.

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SPURWINK



**FOR HELPING TO MAKE THIS
YEAR'S CONFERENCE POSSIBLE**

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

Allegra Hirsh-Wright, MSW, LCSW is the Clinical and Training Manager in the Department of Clinical Innovation at Maine Behavioral Healthcare and is a licensed clinical social worker with over fifteen years of experience working in the field of trauma. Ms. Hirsh-Wright is a nationally recognized expert in the areas of trauma-informed care, secondary traumatic stress (STS), and professional resilience and has presented on the topics in both national and local fora. Ms. Hirsh-Wright has expertise in direct clinical practice providing treatment to children and families who have been exposed to trauma and is a nationally certified clinician, supervisor, and consultant in multiple child trauma treatment models. Ms. Hirsh-Wright has extensive experience facilitating organizational, community, and state-wide change efforts related to evidence-based practices and trauma-informed care. Ms. Hirsh-Wright sits on multiple state and national committees and Boards that focus on childhood exposure to trauma, trauma-informed care, and resilience, and she has authored multiple resources on the topics of STS and resilience. Ms. Hirsh-Wright is an adjunct professor in the University of Southern Maine's School of Social Work and is a lover of all things orange.

Leslie Lennig, LCSW has over 25 years in the field of social services. She has worked for Community Health and Counseling Services for the past 12 years and currently acts the Clinical Director for mental health services. Ms. Lennig has co-written two curriculums that have been utilized with at-risk youth in Central and Southern Maine since 2006 – The Adolescent Anger Management Program and Skills for Responsible Thinking. Ms. Lennig is extensively trained in trauma informed practices, specifically Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), as both a practitioner and as a supervisor. Through her work at CHCS, she has been involved in several projects, including aiding in the development of an electronic app for more efficient documentation called Bells, the Consumer Engagement Forum, the CCBHC program and providing group supervision for all of the licensed clinicians in the agency. Ms. Lennig is also working on developing several initiatives including the internal staff development institute, the ethics review board and the case review

council. Ms. Lennig and has presented for multiple local conferences and has been sought out by community organizations/businesses to speak on current trends and themes, such as Building Empathy, Pandemic Fatigues, Workplace Burn-Out and Generational Impacts in the Workplace. Leslie has presented at the National Association of Social Work (NASW) Maine conference 2x on evidenced based modalities and has been recognized by the Child Welfare League of America. More recently, she has been selected a presenter for the National Family Focused Treatment Association conference this summer.

Judith Josiah-Martin, PhD, ACSW, CADC, has been at the University of Maine for 15 years, as faculty and student life staff, and is the 2021 recipient of the President's Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award recipient. She studied at Smith College School of Social Work earning a PhD in Clinical Social Work, and Washington University-St. Louis for a MSW degree in Social Welfare, Administration and Community Development. Current member of the NASW ME chapter, with service to the DEI committee. Dr. Josiah-Martin is an experienced clinician, program administrator, community advocate, educator, training consultant and researcher. Research interest has centered on women and addiction, and the protective factors that disrupt opioid dependence for this population. Her areas of specialization include: substance use and trauma related disorders; domestic violence; parenting and family life; practice interventions for under-represented and marginalized populations; and intercultural effective communication.

Lisa Deszo, LCSW, LADC, CCS, graduated with her MSW degree from the University of Maine in Orono where she also obtained interdisciplinary graduate certificates in Disability Studies and Gerontology, and completed the Hartford Partnership Program for Aging and Program for Leadership in Rural Gerontological Practice. Ms. Deszo is a clinician of mental health and co-occurring disorders, researcher, and community liaison, who works with children and families, senior citizens, and individuals with substance use disorders. Her areas of specialization include substance use, LGBTQIA+ issues, life transitions, and intergenerational development.

Rich Hooks Wayman, J.D., serves as the President and CEO for Volunteers of America Northern New England (www.voanne.org), a nonprofit organization offering affordable housing, residential treatment and community based social services in Maine and New Hampshire. Prior to his tenure at Volunteers of America, Rich served as the National Executive Director for the Children's Defense Fund in Washington, D.C. Additionally, Richard was the CEO of LUK, Inc., a regional child welfare agency in Massachusetts, the Executive Director of a statewide supportive housing in Minnesota, and served as the Senior Youth Policy Analyst for the National Alliance to End Homelessness in Washington, D.C. He authored the Minnesota Runaway and Homeless Youth Act and helped launch the nation's first Host Home program for LGBTQ homeless youth in Minneapolis, serving as one of their first host homes. Rich attended the University of Iowa College of Law, graduating with a Juris Doctor in 1992 and is a member of the American Bar Association's Commission on Homelessness and Poverty. Rich and his husband (Aaron) have six adoptive children and live in Portland, Maine where he continues his life-long search for the perfect chocolate malt.

Chris McLaughlin, MSW, LCSW (he/him/his) is the Executive Director of the Maine Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and owner of Inspired Consulting Group, LLC. A lifelong resident of Maine, he obtained both his BA in Psychology (1996) and his MSW (2001) from the University of Maine. Chris has spent more than 25 years as a provider and a leader in behavioral health services for youth and families across a variety of clinical settings, including treatment foster care, residential treatment facilities, public schools, private practice, community-based programs, and psychiatric hospital-based services. Chris has a passion for teaching and is an adjunct faculty member at the University of Maine and Husson University in Bangor. He served for five years on the Maine Board of Social Work Licensing and is a member of both the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the Society for Social Work Leadership in Health Care (SSWLHC), where he is the current Maine Chapter President and is a member of the National Board. A lifelong learner in

leadership, coaching, and mentoring, he is a graduate of the Disney Institute leadership program and the Daniel Hanley Health Leadership Development program in Maine. Chris is on the Faculty for the SSWLHC's Leadership Development Institute and holds two certifications in Diversity and Inclusion and Building a Diverse Workforce from Cornell University. Nationally, Chris was the SSWLHC's 2019 recipient of the Eleanor Clark Award for Innovative Programs in Patient Care for his work in youth suicide prevention. In Maine, Chris was recognized in 2019 for his advocacy and commitment to LGBTQ+ youth and was named Health Care Social Worker of the Year in 2019 by the Maine Hospital Association and the Maine Chapter of the SSWLHC for his leadership role on the award-winning "Acadia CARES" curriculum. In spring of 2020, Chris was named the University of Maine School of Social Work's Alumni of the Year. In 2022, Chris was elected to serve on his local School Committee. Chris and his husband live in Hermon, Maine with their three dogs, Anna, Becky, Sawyer and are avid fans of many types of recreation and leisure during all of Maine's seasons.

Directions to Cross Insurance Center

From I-95 North or South:

Take Exit 182A to I-395.
Follow to Exit 3B (Main Street).
Take a right onto Main Street.
Take a left onto Buck Street at the third light.
Parking will be on your left.

From Route 1A:

From Ellsworth, travel I-395 West.
Follow to Exit 3 (Main Street).
Take a right onto Main Street.
Take a left onto Buck Street at the third light.
Parking will be on your left.

ABOUT THE VENUE

- *No outside food or drink is permitted inside the Cross Insurance Center. Any food or drink must be consumed before entering. This includes coffee and bottled water.*
- *Visitors to the Cross Insurance Center are subject to security checks, including metal detectors.*
- *Parking is available adjacent to the venue or in the parking garage across Main Street.*

JUNE 28, 2023
8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

REGISTRATION COST:

\$99

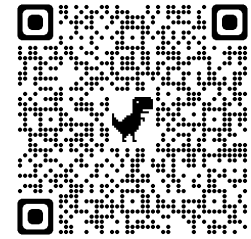
Note: You must be pre-registered to attend.

Registration deadline June 16, 2023.

Registration fee is non-refundable, but is transferable.

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HANDOUTS AND REFERENCE MATERIALS

Will be available on the Wings website one week prior to the conference. Please print them if you'd like a hard copy.

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